

1 AN ACT concerning wildlife.

2 Be it enacted by the People of the State of Illinois,  
3 represented in the General Assembly:

4 Section 1. Short title. This Act may be cited as the  
5 Illinois Hunting Heritage Protection Act.

6 Section 5. Findings. The General Assembly finds the  
7 following:

8 (1) Recreational hunting is an important and  
9 traditional recreational activity in which 14,000,000  
10 Americans 16 years of age and older participate.

11 (2) Hunters have been and continue to be among the  
12 foremost supporters of sound wildlife management and  
13 conservation practices in the United States.

14 (3) Persons who hunt and organizations related to  
15 hunting provide direct assistance to wildlife managers  
16 and enforcement officers of federal, state, and local  
17 governments.

18 (4) Purchases of hunting licenses, permits, and  
19 stamps and payment of excise taxes on goods used by  
20 hunters have generated billions of dollars for wildlife  
21 conservation, research, and management.

22 (5) Recreational hunting is an essential component  
23 of effective wildlife management, in that it is an  
24 important tool for reducing conflicts between people and  
25 wildlife and provides incentives for the conservation of  
26 wildlife, habitats, and ecosystems on which wildlife  
27 depend.

28 (6) Recreational hunting is an environmentally  
29 acceptable activity that occurs and can be provided for  
30 on State public lands without adverse effects on other  
31 uses of that land.

1 Section 10. Definitions. For the purposes of this Act:

2 "Hunting" means the lawful pursuit, trapping, shooting,  
3 capture, collection, or killing of wildlife or the attempt to  
4 pursue, trap, shoot, capture, collect, or kill wildlife.

5 "State public lands" means any land or water, excluding  
6 any land held in trust for the benefit of an Indian tribe or  
7 individual, that is:

- 8 (1) publicly accessible;
- 9 (2) owned by the State; and
- 10 (3) managed by the State for the purpose of  
11 conserving natural resources.

12 Section 15. Recreational hunting.

13 (a) Subject to valid existing rights, State public lands  
14 shall be open to access and use for recreational hunting  
15 except as limited by the State for reasons of public safety  
16 or homeland security or as otherwise limited by law.

17 (b) The State shall exercise its authority, consistent  
18 with subsection (a), in a manner to support, promote, and  
19 enhance recreational hunting opportunities, to the extent  
20 authorized by law.

21 (c) State public land management decisions and actions  
22 should, to the greatest practical extent, result in no net  
23 loss of land area available for hunting opportunities on  
24 State public lands.

25 (d) By October 1 of each year, the Governor shall submit  
26 to the General Assembly a report describing:

27 (1) areas administered by the State that have been  
28 closed during the previous year to recreational hunting  
29 and the reasons for the closures; and

30 (2) areas administered by the State that were  
31 opened to recreational hunting to compensate for those  
32 areas closed under paragraph (1).

33 (e) No withdrawal, change of classification, or change

1 of management status that effectively closes 100 or more  
2 acres of State public land to access or use for recreational  
3 hunting may take effect, unless the Governor has submitted at  
4 least a 30-day advance written notice of the withdrawal or  
5 change to the General Assembly.

6 (f) Nothing in this Act shall be construed to compel the  
7 opening to recreational hunting of national parks or national  
8 monuments administered by the National Park Service.

9 (g) This Act does not require the State to give  
10 preference to hunting over other uses of State public lands  
11 or over land or water management priorities established by  
12 State law.

13 Section 99. Effective date. This Act takes effect upon  
14 becoming law.